

House Republican Press Release

July 7, 2005
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Giuliano to Cosponsor Eminent Domain Reform Legislation



Declaring that Connecticut needs to move quickly to protect people's homes from municipalities hoping to seize residential properties for economic development projects, state Representative Marilyn Giuliano today said she will cosponsor a House Republican measure to reform the state's eminent domain law.

House Republicans plan to introduce the measure during an upcoming special session either later this month or in early August when the legislature is required to return to the Capitol to reconsider bills vetoed by Gov. M. Jodi Rell during the regular session, said Representative Giuliano, R-23rd District.

"This legislation will do what the U. S. Supreme Court failed to do in its recent Kelo vs. New London decision – uphold the rights of property owners by preventing municipalities from seizing people's homes for economic development projects," Representative Giuliano said. "As a state legislator, one of my most important responsibilities is to protect the rights of the citizens I represent."

"Reforming our state's eminent domain law needs to happen as soon as possible – before another Connecticut municipality tries to do what New London did to the homeowners who live in the Fort Trumbull area. The Supreme Court had the opportunity to issue a decisive ruling that would have preserved and protected the rights of private property owners and failed to do so. Now it's time for the General Assembly to step in and do the right thing," Representative Giuliano said.

House Minority Leader Robert M. Ward, R-86th District, is spearheading the drive to protect property owners' rights in the wake of the controversial Supreme Court decision involving New London and residents of the Fort Trumbull area who challenged the city's use of eminent domain.

By a 5-4 margin the court ruled the state's eminent domain laws were constitutional but invited Connecticut to enact limits on its law if it wished to do so.

The House Republican proposal would delete from the existing law six lines that permit development agencies to seize property for economic development. The measure would leave unchanged the right of municipalities and the State of Connecticut to acquire

property under eminent domain for traditional public works projects, such as the construction of roads, bridges and schools, and to deal with truly blighted properties that pose health or safety hazards, Representative Giuliano said.